

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks. Claims 10, 12, 15, 16, 20, 21, 23, and 24 have been amended, claims 1-9, 11, 13, 14, 17-19, and 22 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter contained therein, and new claims 25-33 have been added. Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 10, 12, 15, 16, 20, 21, and 23-33 will remain pending.

The Applicant notes that, relative to the previously pending claims, the form of the amended and new claims is intended to better conform to U.S. practice. For instance, multiple dependencies and reference numerals have been removed.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner objected to claims 13, 14, and 22, but indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base and any intervening claims. In response to the Examiner's objection, the Applicant has added new claims 25-31:

- Claim 25 is like original independent claim 7, and incorporates the limitations of claim 13.
- Claim 26 is like original independent claim 7, and incorporates the limitations of claim 14.
- Claim 27 is like original independent claim 9, and incorporates the limitations of claim 13.
- Claim 28 is like original independent claim 9, and incorporates the limitations of claim 14.
- Claim 29 is like original independent claim 17, and incorporates the limitations of claim 22.
- Claim 30 is like original independent claim 18, and incorporates the limitations of claim 22.
- Claim 31 is like original independent claim 19, and incorporates the limitations of claim 22.

Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that claims 25-31 are now allowable. Claims 10, 12, 15, 16, 20, 21, 23, and 24 have been amended to respectively depend from allowable claims 25-29 and are patentable for the reasons supporting patentability of claims

25-29 and for the additional features recited therein. New claims 32 and 33 are like dependent claim 21 and respectively depend from allowable claims 30 and 31. Claims 32 and 33 are patentable for the reasons supporting patentability of claims 30 and 31 and for the additional features recited therein.

II. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1-4, 8, 9, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Bullock et al. (WO 99/52220). The Applicant has cancelled these claims, rendering the rejection moot.

III. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Bullock et al. in view of Timbs et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,243,593); claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Bullock et al. in view of Christie (U.S. Patent No. 6,298,064); claims 7, 10-12, 15-17, 19-21, and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Bullock et al. in view of Hylton (U.S. Patent No. 5,613,190); and claim 23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Bullock et al. in view of Hylton and Christie.

The Applicant has cancelled claims 5-7, 11, 17, and 19, rendering the rejection moot with respect to these claims. As noted above, claims 10, 12, 15, 16, 20, 21, 23, and 24 have been amended to depend from allowable new claims 25-31. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner's rejections of claims 10, 12, 15, 16, 20, 21, 23, and 24 be withdrawn.

IV. Conclusion

All objections and rejections having been addressed, the Applicant requests issuance of a notice of allowance indicating the allowability of claims 10, 12, 15, 16, 20, 21, and 23-32. If anything further is necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, the Applicant requests that the Examiner contact the Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

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Client/Matter: 060256-0276518

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 033975. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

PILLSBURY WINTHROP LLP

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Carlo Cotrone', written in black ink.

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